

COMMUNICATIONS CPYRIGHT

FOIAb3b

The CIA finds a publisher

In March of this year, Ramparts published an article by Michele Ray telling how the CIA had taken over command of the search for Che and his guerrillas

since first pinpointing him in Bolivia in February 1967, and how agents Felix Ramos and Eduardo Gonzalez had made several supervisory visits to the guerrilla zone as the net drew tighter.

Miss Ray's article was widely criticized when it first appeared, but subsequent events suggest that if anything, she underestimated the extent of the

CIA's vendetta against Che and the scope of its subversion in Bolivia. Dramatic confirmation of her thesis came in July after Ramparts and Bantam Books published Che's diaries, having obtained rights from Che's widow, Aleida March de Guevara, and from the Cuban government. In the middle of the month, Antonio Arguedas, Bolivia's minister of the interior and a close personal friend of President Rene Barrientos, suddenly disappeared from La Paz. He turned up at Iquique, Chile, a week later on July 19, and revealed that he had been working for the CIA since 1964. Arguedas also said that it was he who had sent a copy of the diaries to Fidel Castro and that he had been forced to flee Bolivia because the CIA had discovered this act [See Ramparts, Nov. 17, 1968].

The CIA's concern with Che's diaries, however, began long before any copies were passed to Arguedas. The moment Che was murdered, Ramos and Gonzalez began sifting carefully through the documents that had been captured with the guerrillas, including messages sent from the Bolivian jungle to Cuba and those returned from Castro to Che. But the CIA was not the only one to make use of the diaries. The Bolivian High Command claimed them as spoils of war, and by order of the generals they were also given to Andrew St. George, a Hungarian refugee, now a journalist. St. George's job was to peddle the diaries to the American publishing industry for the highest price he could get and then split the take with the generals.

The negotiations were truly bizarre. With the CIA's encouragement, St. George and the generals made a tentative deal with Magnum, a photographers' news consortium. Magnum was to pay the Bolivians a \$125,000 advance, royalties of 33 per cent on the first \$100,000, 50 per cent on from \$100,000 to \$1 million and 55 per cent on anything above \$1 million. The generals were hoping that their profit on the documents would help recoup the \$3 million of U.S. aid money it cost them to capture Che. However, the original deal which St. George set up miscarried when Magnum's French partners decided that they didn't want to traffic in Che's remains and persuaded a majority of the consortium's members to vote to discontinue negotiations.



(Saint)

P - St. George, Andrew

P - Kristol, Irving

C.I.A. 4.01 Operations Coordinating Board

C.I.A. 1.01 Dulles, Allen